



Obama Extends US Military Mission in Afghanistan

President Barack Obama, flanked by Vice President Joe Biden, right, and Defense Secretary Ash Carter, speaks about Afghanistan, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015, in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington. Obama announced that he will keep U.S. troops in Afghanistan when he leaves office in 2017, casting aside his promise to end the war on his watch and instead ensuring he hands the conflict off to his successor. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

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Obama Extends US Military Mission in Afghanistan

JULIE PACE

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP)—When President Barack Obama leaves office in 15 months, he'll hand his successor military conflicts in the two countries where he promised to end prolonged war: Afghanistan and Iraq.

There will be far fewer troops in each, and the American forces won't have a direct combat role. But for Obama, it's nevertheless a frustrating end to a quest that was central to his political rise.

"As you are all well aware, I do not support the idea of endless war," Obama said Thursday as he announced he was dropping plans to withdraw nearly all U.S. forces from Afghanistan by the end of next year. Instead, he'll leave office with at least 5,500 on the ground to help protect gains made during 14 years of war.

As a result, the winner of the 2016 presidential election will become the third American commander in chief to oversee the Afghan war.

The president's goal of ending the wars he inherited had already been tarnished by the return of U.S. forces to Iraq last year, 2½ years after they left. The troops are there to help Iraq fight the Islamic State, a mission Obama has said will likely outlast his presidency.

Obama never mentioned Iraq Thursday, but the tenuous situation there has no doubt hung over his decision-making on Afghanistan. Obama's critics contend the decision to withdraw from Iraq created the vacuum that allowed the Islamic State to thrive and warned leaving Afghanistan next year could have the same consequences.

Military commanders have argued for months that Afghans needed additional assistance and support from the U.S. to beat back a resurgent Taliban and keep the Islamic State from using the country as a haven.

The president had originally planned to withdraw all but a small embassy-based force from Afghanistan in late 2016, shortly before leaving office. Under the new \$15 billion-a-year plan, the U.S. will maintain its current force of 9,800 through most of 2016, then begin drawing down to 5,500 late in the year or in early 2017. Obama's decision thrusts the war into the middle of a presidential campaign that so far has barely touched on Afghanistan. Candidates now will be pressed to say how they will try to do what Obama could not — end a conflict that has killed more than 2,230 American service members and cost more than \$1 trillion.

On Thursday, leading Democratic candidates — including Hillary Rodham Clinton, who served as Obama's secretary of state — were silent about the president's decision. Last year, after Obama announced his original 2016 withdrawal timeline, Clinton said she would be open to extending the U.S. presence if Afghan leaders made that request.

The president's revamped plan was welcomed by several Republican presidential candidates, but some said 5,500 troops would not be enough.

"If he is truly committed to fighting terrorism and securing a stable Afghanistan, he shouldn't short-change what our military commanders have said they need to complete the mission," said Jeb Bush. The former Florida governor did not say how many troops he thought would be sufficient. According to a defense official, the president approved the highest number requested by commanders, with the greatest amount of flexibility.

Former technology executive Carly Fiorina called Obama's decision a "recognition of reality" in Afghanistan. And New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie said the president was "waking up to the fact that disengaging America from the world



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White House press secretary Josh Earnest speaks during the daily briefing at the White House in Washington, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015. Earnest answered questions about President Barack Obama's decision to leave more troops in Afghanistan.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

and allowing there to be safe havens for terrorists is not the right way to protect American homeland secu-

urity and national security." Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul was an outlier among Republican candidates. He

vowed to remove U.S. troops from Afghanistan immediately if elected president. □

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In this June, 2015 photo, former House Speaker Dennis Hastert, right, departs the federal courthouse with attorney Thomas C. Green in Chicago. An attorney for Hastert told a federal judge that the former House speaker intends to plead guilty in a federal hush-money case during a hearing Thursday Oct. 15, 2015 in Chicago. (AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast)

Attorney: Former U.S. House speaker Dennis Hastert intends to plead guilty

MICHAEL TARM
Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Former U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert intends to plead guilty in a federal hush-money case linked to allegations of sexual misconduct from decades ago, a defense attorney told a federal judge Thursday.

Hastert, a Republican who held the powerful post of House speaker for nine years until 2007, is charged with one count of breaking banking laws and one count of lying to the FBI about agreeing to pay someone \$3.5 million to hide claims of unspecified past misconduct. Each count carries a maximum five-year prison term.

The Associated Press and other media, citing anonymous sources, have reported the payments were meant to conceal claims of sexual misconduct. The indictment against Hastert does not detail the underlying misconduct, and both prosecutors and defense attorneys have taken steps to keep the information confidential.

Hastert was the longest serving Republican House speaker, post that made him the most powerful figure in Congress and second-in-line to the presidency.

A written plea agreement should be completed by Monday, attorney John Gallo said during a brief status hearing. At the attorney's request, a federal judge set Oct. 28 as the date for Hastert to change his plea.

Defendants typically agree to plead guilty in hopes of a more lenient sentence. A plea deal for the 73-year-old Illinois Republican would also avert a trial and help keep any potentially embarrassing Hastert secrets quiet.

Neither Gallo nor prosecutors offered any details about what the plea deal might say, including which counts Hastert would plead guilty to or whether he would serve any prison time.

After being questioned

by banking officials about large cash withdrawals, Hastert allegedly began structuring the withdrawals in increments of just under \$10,000 to avoid reporting rules. He's also accused of lying to the FBI about the reason for the withdrawals. Investigators have said Hastert withdrew about \$1.7 million from 2010 to 2014.

A plea deal would mean that "Individual A," who has never been identified, would not have to testify about receiving any of the money.

Hastert could still change his mind. Gallo told U.S. District Judge Thomas M. Durkin that the defense "reserved the right" to go to trial if talks collapse in the final days.

A main aim of Hastert's lawyers has likely been to ensure details about his alleged misconduct are not included in the plea deal, in sentencing memos or in any other court document, said Jeff Cramer, a former federal prosecutor in Chicago.

The question of how to address motive is probably another sticking point, he added. Plea deals typically touch on motive, though in Hastert's case that could force him to acknowledge the conduct behind the charges. Plea deals often require a defendant to plead guilty to one count in exchange for the rest being dropped. Some deals fix a specific sentence, while others suggest a range of punishments, leaving the final call to a judge.

Prosecutors are probably seeking a prison sentence. It would be unusual for them to entertain the possibility of probation on such serious charges. Each count is punishable by up to five years behind bars.

A sentencing date is usually set for a date after the guilty plea, though defendants are sometimes sentenced the same day. The latter could be an option Hastert prefers, allowing him to get the process over with fast. □



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Actor Randy Quaid, wife released from Vermont jail



Evi Quaid, left, hugs attorney Peter Langrock and she and her husband, actor Randy Quaid, have their handcuffs removed in court Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015, in St. Albans, Vt. A Vermont judge released the couple, who says they'll now address 5-year-old criminal charges in California. (Elodie Reed/St. Albans Messenger via AP, Pool)

LISA RATHKE

Associated Press

ST. ALBANS, Vt. (AP) — Released from Vermont custody, actor Randy Quaid and his wife said Thursday they will now turn their attention to resolving 5-year-old criminal charges in California that they squatted in a home they once owned and vandalized the property.

A Vermont judge dismissed fugitive-from-justice charges against the couple and released them, citing discrepancies in some dates and saying she couldn't find probable cause to support the accusations.

The Quaid's are wanted in Santa Barbara, California, on felony charges filed in 2010 after they were found living in a guesthouse of a home they previously owned. Court papers said the Quaid's damaged or destroyed furniture, a fireplace and a mirror. The couple fled to Canada and were arrested in Ver-

mont last Friday while trying to re-enter the U.S. After they left the courthouse Thursday, the Quaid's said they'll stay in Lincoln, Vermont, to care for Evi Quaid's ailing father and address the California charges. She grew up in

Vermont.

"I never worried about being found guilty or any of that for any of these charges because I know the truth, and I know the facts are going to come out at some point, and today was a good sign of that," Randy

Quaid said.

"And we're still going to have to deal with the California situation," the Quaid's lawyer, Peter Langrock, said. "And we plan to, not as a fugitive from justice but the standpoint of a citizen."

In a statement Thursday, the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's office said it will seek a governor's warrant to mandate the Quaid's return to Cali-

fornia, a process that can take months.

Outside court, Randy Quaid spoke about his stay in jail. He told reporters he was on a wing with three other men, and they all got along and played a lot of cribbage and Sudoku.

"The food wasn't so bad," he said. The Quaid's said they were pleased to be in Vermont, and he joked about possibly becoming a firefighter. □

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Authorities retrace Lamar Odom's visit to Nevada brothel



Richard Hunter, media director for Dennis Hof, who owns the Love Ranch, talks in Crystal, Nev., about how he found former NBA basketball player Lamar Odom unconscious. Odom was found unresponsive after four days at the brothel.

(AP Photo/Chris Carlson)

SALLY HO
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Authorities are retracing Lamar Odom's \$75,000 visit to the brothel where he was found unconscious as the former NBA and reality TV star remains hospitalized and the Kardashian team spars with the brothel's

owner over media attention surrounding the ordeal. There's been no official word on Odom's condition, but the Rev. Jesse Jackson visited him Wednesday and said he's on life support. Odom's grandmother, Florence Odom, declined to comment on his status Thursday, saying she was

becoming distressed at unfounded speculation that her grandson would be taken off life support. His father, Joe Odom, also declined to discuss his condition, saying that information was confidential. Nye County law enforcement and brothel officials said Odom's incident was

a rarity for the Love Ranch, in the rural community of Crystal, and have summed it up as a possible drug-related medical episode.

"We're going to be looking at the entire situation, how he actually came to be where he is now," Nye County Sheriff Sharon Wehrlly said at a Wednesday news conference.

Odom was found unconscious at the brothel Tuesday with white and reddish substances coming from his nose and mouth. His breathing was consistent, but he seemed to be in a deep sleep-like state, said Richard Hunter, a Love Ranch spokesman and one of the people who called 911. He was to be flown by helicopter about 80 miles to Las Vegas, but he had to be taken by ambulance because he couldn't fit in the aircraft. Odom's estranged wife, Khloe Kardashian, rushed to his side at Sunrise Hospital and Medical Center. Since then, friends, teammates and loved ones have visited and posted requests for prayers on social media.

Authorities have taken a

blood sample to find out if Odom overdosed on drugs or alcohol, but the results could take several weeks.

The Kardashian team and Love Ranch owner Dennis Hof also locked horns over media attention while about a dozen reporters and camera crews staked out the hospital.

Khloe Kardashian's representatives reached out Wednesday to Hof and asked him not to speak to the press. But Hof said he's troubled by the lack of communication from the reality TV star, and he dismissed her rep's request that Khloe Kardashian do interviews instead of him. She has so far issued no public statements.

"I know what happened," Hof said. "I'm the one protecting my business and telling the truth about it." Kardashian's rep said they politely asked Hof to respect their privacy.

Hunter said Odom scheduled his brothel visit a week in advance and asked for a ride to the business Saturday, arriving at 4:30 p.m. He paid by credit card after putting down an initial 10 percent deposit for the reservation. Odom's first-ever visit to the Love Ranch. He stayed in the "best VIP suite" and chose two women to accompany him. Per Nevada law, prostitutes negotiate services and prices privately with customers as independent contractors. Hof gets 50 percent.

Odom spent about \$75,000 for a minimum four-day stay, Hof said. The site has a five-day maximum policy, but the owner said Odom talked about staying the entire week to celebrate Hof's recent birthday. □

Fantasy sports sites ordered to shut down in Nevada

KIMBERLY PIERCEALL
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Nevada regulators ordered daily fantasy sports sites like DraftKings and FanDuel to shut down Thursday, saying they can't operate in the state without a gambling license.

The decision comes amid growing backlash by investigators and regulators over the sites, which have grown in popularity in the

past year. Participants on the sites can compete in games involving NFL or college players, paying an entry fee that goes into a larger pool. Then they try to assemble teams that earn the most points based on real-life stats in a given period of time with a certain percentage of top finishers earning a payout. Entry fees on DraftKings range from 25 cents to

more than \$5,000. Some prizes top \$1 million. DraftKings and FanDuel say the sites provide games of skill and not of chance and are therefore protected by the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act established in 2006, which has language protecting fantasy sports.

The games are legal in 45 states. On Thursday, Nevada's Gaming Control Board issued a notice say-

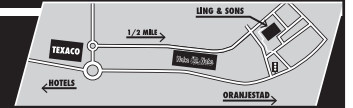
ing the sites must stop offering their contests to residents in the state effective immediately. Operators face felony fines and 10 years in prison. Regulators said the sites can apply for licenses. "Since offering (daily fantasy sports) in Nevada is illegal without the appropriate license, all unlicensed activities must cease and desist from the date of this notice," their decision said. □



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US Financial Front:

Applications for US unemployment aid drop to 42-year low



Alexander Haupt, left, 21, of Miami, looks over his job application during a job fair at Dolphin Mall in Miami. The U.S. Labor Department reported on the number of people who applied for unemployment benefits during the week ending Oct. 10 on Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015. (AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee)

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans seeking unemployment aid fell last week, matching the lowest level in 42 years, strong evidence that employers remain confident enough in the economy to hold onto their staffs. The Labor Department

said Thursday that weekly applications for unemployment benefits fell 7,000 to a seasonally adjusted 255,000. Applications last touched that level in July, but before that hadn't been so low since November 1973. The four-week average of applications, a less volatile measure, dropped to

265,000, the lowest since December 1973.

There are signs the economy has slowed in recent weeks, in part because the strong dollar has cut into exports and overall hiring has weakened. Americans have also been reluctant to spend. But faltering growth has not yet led businesses to cut jobs. The weekly applications are a proxy for layoffs and have been below 300,000 since March, a historically low level that typically points to solid hiring.

Yet hiring has stumbled in the past two months, raising worries that employers have turned cautious about adding jobs. The U.S. economy gained just 142,000 jobs in September

and only 136,000 in August, below the average of nearly 229,000 in the previous 12 months.

Industries that have been directly affected by slower growth overseas and by the stronger dollar, such as manufacturing, have been cutting jobs. The dollar has risen about 13 percent in value against foreign currencies in the past 12 months.

That makes U.S. exports more expensive in international markets while lowering the price for competing imports. Growth has also slowed or come to a halt in large economies such as China, Canada, Brazil and Europe.

Falling oil prices have also caused drilling companies

to cut back on their orders for steel pipe and other equipment, another blow to factories.

The economy is expected to expand just 1 percent to 1.5 percent at an annual rate in the third quarter, a sharp drop back after 3.9 percent growth in the second quarter.

All of which complicates the Federal Reserve's decision on when to raise short-term interest rates, which have been pinned at nearly zero since December 2008. Fed Chair Janet Yellen has said it would likely be appropriate to raise rates before the end of this year, but slowing growth and weakening inflation could delay that move. □

US consumer prices drop 0.2 percent through September

PAUL WISEMAN

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. consumer prices were dragged lower again last month by plunging energy costs, according to the Labor Department. The consumer price index fell 0.2 percent in September, following a 0.1 percent drop in August. Gasoline prices dropped 9 percent last month after falling 4.1 percent in August. Overall consumer prices were unchanged over the past year. Excluding volatile food and energy prices, so-called

core consumer prices rose 0.2 percent from August and 1.9 percent from September 2014.

The Federal Reserve wants to see annual inflation running close to 2 percent. The overall number is well short of that goal, but core inflation is close. The Fed decided last month to hold off on a long-anticipated increase of short-term interest rates, which it has kept near zero since December 2008.

An economic slowdown in China has pushed down prices of commodities, including oil. □

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Teenager becomes a focus in Israel-Palestinian conflict

KARIN LAUB
JOSEF FEDERMAN
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The fate of a Palestinian boy seized center stage Thursday in the battle of narratives accompanying the recent burst of deadly Israeli-Palestinian violence.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas ignited an uproar in Israel after falsely claiming in a televised speech that Israelis had "summarily executed" Ahmed Manasra, when the 13-year-old actually was recovering at an Israeli hospital after he stabbed two Israelis, including a boy his own age.

Palestinians, in turn, were enraged by video showing Ahmed lying in the street, his head bloodied and his

legs splayed, as bystanders curse him and shout "Die!" in Hebrew. The images, widely circulated on social media, made no mention of the preceding attack by Ahmed and his cousin Hassan, 15, who was then shot and killed by police Monday.

The case has become a lightning rod for both sides. Israel has repeatedly accused Abbas of fomenting violence with what it says are incendiary comments.

"Now we have a new big lie. That new big lie is that Israel is executing Palestinians," Netanyahu said Thursday. Still, he said he would be "perfectly open" to meeting Abbas to address what the Israeli leader said was a wave of incitement.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu looks on during a press conference at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015. Netanyahu on Thursday said he would be "perfectly open" to meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in order to end weeks of Israeli-Palestinian unrest.

(AP Photo/Sebastian Scheiner)



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Abbas, who has long argued that armed attacks on Israelis go against Palestinian interests, has denied the Israeli allegations that he is fomenting unrest. He did not immediately respond to Netanyahu's offer. In his speech Wednesday, Abbas said Israel has engaged in excessive force and the "summary execution of our children in cold blood."

The high-level name-calling highlighted the abyss between the two leaders, at a time when prospects for a return to Israeli-Palestinian negotiations appear nil. In the past month, eight Israelis were killed in Palestinian attacks, most of them stabbings. During the same period, 31 Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire, including 14 labeled by Israel as attackers, and the others in clashes between stone-throwers and Israeli troops. Israel has increased security across the country in response to the unrest. On Thursday, the military said it

would deploy 300 soldiers in Jerusalem to help police maintain order, guard public transportation and the city's main streets.

Both sides use social media to promote their official narratives.

Israeli officials have released security camera videos of the attacks, sometimes within minutes. The police, army, Foreign Ministry and prime minister's office cooperate, collecting clips from Palestinian websites that are seen as promoting violence or searching for Facebook posts from assailants that they say indicated they were about to commit violent acts.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Emanuel Nahshon said the strategy is to spread Israel's messages and complain to popular services about allegedly offensive comment. He said Israel persuaded Google's YouTube service and Facebook to remove several Palestinian videos.

Palestinian authorities, meanwhile, have focused on releasing amateur video appearing to show Israeli police using excessive force.

The battle also plays out in private Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

On the Palestinian side, social media play a growing role in the conflict. Palestinian media experts say the vast majority of Palestinians between the ages of 12 and 22 use social media.

For the young, social media have taken the place of political factions that were key to organizing major bouts of fighting with Israel in the past.

In this round of violence, Palestinian attacks on Israelis have largely been carried out by individuals with no ties to militant groups. Motives often remain murky, but relatives of assailants have cited as potential triggers both the pressures of life under Israeli occupation and videos seen on social media. □



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Meeting deadline, Iran opens path to nuke deal passage

GEORGE JAHN
Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — The U.N. nuclear agency will be able to deliver an assessment of the suspicions that Iran worked on atomic weapons by Dec. 15, as planned, it said Thursday. The agency said in a statement that it has completed a series of meetings with Iranian officials focused on "ambiguities" in information previously provided by Tehran, allowing the IAEA to deliver the report in the timeframe set out in a deal between Iran and six world powers.

Iran says it never worked on nuclear weapons, and it is unclear whether the agency will be able to make a definite ruling on the allegations. Diplomats have previously said that the report may confirm only that Iran provided answers to all IAEA questions without saying outright that the answers confirmed or disproved the suspicions. But they say an IAEA ruling that Iran has cooperated could allow the United States and its allies to accept an end to decade-long attempts to probe the allegations.

Washington and its allies insist they have evidence of past nuclear arms work by Tehran. But the diplomats say the U.S. is ready to accept a vaguer report than it would normally demand because seeking further clarity would lead to deadlock with Iran that would jeopardize the larger agreement.

That overarching deal was reached July 14, but the date for its adoption is this Sunday. That makes IAEA confirmation that Iran met the deadline before Sunday important. □

Syrian troops launch offensive in central Homs province

ALBERT AJI
BASSEM MROUE
Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Syrian troops and their allies launched an offensive in the central province of Homs on Thursday and Russia's government said its warplanes carried out a rare airstrike near Damascus targeting an Islamic State group position south-east of the capital.

The offensive came as a senior Iranian official told reporters in Damascus that Tehran would consider sending troops to Syria only upon a request from the Syrian government.

Alaeddin Boroujerdi, the head of an influential parliamentary committee on national security and foreign policy, reiterated his country's full support for the Syrian government, stressing that a political solution is the only way for Syria to emerge from the current crisis.

Boroujerdi's comments came despite reports that hundreds of Iranian troops have already been deployed in northern and central Syria, dramatically escalating Tehran's involvement in the civil war as they join allied Hezbollah fighters in an ambitious offensive to wrest key areas from rebels. A regional official who has knowledge of operational details in Syria told The Associated Press on Wednesday about 1,500 Iranian revolutionary guards have arrived in Syria in the past two weeks, taking advantage of Russian air cover. Other Syrian activists also reported the fresh arrival of Iranian troops.

Asked whether Iran has forces on the ground, Boroujerdi said: "According to Iran's anti-terrorism strategy, we submitted weapons and experts to those two countries (Iraq and

Syria). Any other request will be considered and debated in Iran."

Iranian and Syrian officials have long acknowledged Iran has advisers and military experts in Syria, but de-

terrorist group is moving as a result of the active offenses of the Syrian armed forces," the ministry said, using a term to refer to IS.

The ministry also said Russia has "increased the number

province of Sweida.

Also Thursday, a Syrian military official told AP that the army began an operation in Homs province aiming to "restore security to these areas." The official spoke



Syrian army personnel fire a cannon in Latakia province, about 12 from the border with Turkey in Syria. Backed by Russian airstrikes, the Syrian army has launched an offensive in central and northwestern regions.

(Alexander Kots/Komsomolskaya Pravda via AP)

nied the presence of any ground troops. Wednesday's statements by the regional official and activists were the first confirmation of Iranian fighters taking part in combat operations in Syria.

Syria's state media quoted President Bashar Assad as saying during his meeting with Boroujerdi that "efforts exerted by friendly countries, on top of them Iran and Russia, to strengthen Syria's steadfastness and helping it in the war on terrorism are highly appreciated by the Syrian people." In Moscow, the Defense Ministry said the Russian air force cut the number of its airstrikes over the past 24 hours compared with the day before, hitting 32 targets.

"This is due to the fact that the front line with the ISIS

of reconnaissance flights of aviation and drones" in order to verify reports provided by a joint information center based in Baghdad. The military said Russian airstrikes on militant positions have hit a command center in Aleppo province, a land mine depot in Idlib, artillery positions in Hama and Soviet-made air defense systems in eastern Ghouta near Damascus.

It was not clear if the airstrikes on the suburbs of Damascus were the first to hit the area since Russia began its airstrikes two weeks ago.

The head of the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Rami Abdulrahman, said the strikes targeted an IS position in the village of Beir Qasab southeast of Damascus on the edge of the southern

on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

The official said troops captured the town of Khaldiye near the central city of Hama. State TV said troops killed several militants in the village of Teir Maalah near the city of Homs, Syria's third largest.

Homs-based activist Bebars al-Talawy said the offensive began early Thursday and was preceded by intense air strikes and shelling. He added that the aim of the government is to open the highway between the cities of Homs and Hama.

"Shells were raining on civilian homes," al-Talawy said via Skype. "The air raids even shook the city of Homs," several miles away from the front lines, he said. □



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Regional acting President Artur Mas, center, waves to the crowd as he arrives at the Catalonia's high court for questioning over their suspected roll in holding a poll in Barcelona, Spain, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015. Thousands of people are rallying outside a Barcelona court in support of Catalan regional acting President Artur Mas who has arrived for questioning over the staging of a symbolic referendum on secession from Spain last year.

(AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti)

Thousands turn up at court to support Catalan leader President Artur Mas

**EMILIO MORENATTI
CIARAN GILES**

Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) —

Thousands waving Catalan independence flags rallied Thursday in support of regional acting President Artur Mas who was being questioned at a Barcelona court for holding a symbolic referendum on secession from Spain.

Some 400 pro-independence mayors and independence party leaders joined Mas and his government councilors as he walked parade-style to the court building, cheered on by some 5,000 supporters. Chants of "Independence! Independence!" and "This court does not represent us!" rang out as Mas stopped to salute the crowd at the building's steps.

Speaking later, Mas said he accepted full responsibility

for last year's referendum and accused the central Spanish government in Madrid of turning what he considered a democratic process into a criminal one. Mas is under investigation for grave disobedience, abuse of public funds, prevarication, usurping powers and obstructing justice. If tried and found guilty, he could face disqualification from office or up to one year in jail. Two associates are also under investigation.

The probe was opened after Catalonia went ahead with the Nov. 9, 2014 referendum, defying a ruling by Spain's Constitutional Court. In the mock poll, less than half of those eligible took part, with some 80 percent voting in favor of breaking away from Spain. Mas headed the "Together for Yes" pro-independence alliance that won 62 seats

last month in Catalonia's 135-member parliament, falling short of a majority. His alliance is negotiating with the radical pro-secession CUP party, which won 10 seats, to try to form a coalition majority. Mas has promised to set Catalonia on a path toward independence by 2017 if he gets the majority.

Although the pro-independence camp won 72 seats, it got only 48 percent of the popular vote. This is because Spain's electoral system gives more seats to votes from rural areas, where secession sentiment is strong in Catalonia. Spain has ruled out any possibility of Catalonia becoming independent. Polls show Catalans overwhelmingly support the right for a secession referendum but are evenly divided over independence. □

South Korea: Regional summit chance to help ties with Japan

M. PENNINGTON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — South Korea's president said Thursday that an upcoming summit of Northeast Asia's three leading powers will be a chance to improve her nation's strained relations with Japan.

President Park Geun-hye spoke ahead of a White House meeting Friday with President Barack Obama, who is keen for America's two key Asian allies to overcome bitter differences over Japanese abuses during World War II.

Park told a Washington think tank that in early November, Seoul will host a summit between the leaders of South Korea, Japan and China - the first such meeting in three-and-a-half years.

"I hope this trilateral summit will provide an opportunity for Korea and Japan to clear away obstacles hindering closer bilateral ties and thus hold sincere discussions on the way forward toward a common future," Park said at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Park said she was willing to meet bilaterally with Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, but for such a meeting to be "meaningful" there needed to be progress on the divisive issue of sexual exploitation of Korean women by Japan's imperial army during the war. China has similar gripes with Japan.

South Korea has been seeking an apology and compensation for surviving Korean victims. Park said only 47 such women were still alive.

"We really don't have much time in terms of dealing with this issue and making sure that we can bring closure to their pent-up agony," Park said, according to the English translation of her remarks.

The Japan-South Korea tensions have been a source of anxiety to Washington as it looks to strengthen the U.S. military presence in Asia. The U.S. wants its two allies, which host a total of about 80,000 American forces, to deepen security cooperation against the common threat they face from nuclear-armed North Korea.

The South Korean leader said that the Korean Peninsula stands at a "crossroads" because of the possibility of "strategic provocations" by North Korea in October. There has been speculation that the North, which just marked the 70th anniversary of the ruling communist party, could stage a long-range rocket launch or a nuclear test.

Park described North Korea as the last vestige of the Cold War.

"Vietnam, Myanmar and now Cuba are all headed in the direction of reforms and open door policy. Iran has struck a nuclear agreement. Yet, North Korea clings to the path of isolation by continuing its military provocations and development of nuclear capabilities," she said.

Park said that South Korea, the U.S. and China - the North's only major ally - should make new efforts to deal with Pyongyang. □



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Brazil ex-president testifies in influence peddling probe



Brazil's former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, right, looks at a document with Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff during a Central Workers Union convention in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

(AP Photo/Nelson Antoine)

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva testified Thursday before Brazilian federal prosecutors who are investigating allegations of influence peddling, the ex-leader's foundation said. In a statement, the Instituto Lula said Silva voluntarily appeared for about 1 1/2

hours at the federal public prosecutor's office in the capital, Brasilia. He was questioned in an investigation centering on trips Silva made to several developing nations, including Angola and Cuba, after leaving office. Prosecutors are looking into questions of whether Silva was

paid to sway foreign leaders into awarding inflated contracts to Brazilian construction giant Odebrecht and pushed Brazil's state development bank to give the company well over \$1 billion in low-interest loans. Top executives at Odebrecht have been implicated in a separate kickbacks-for-contracts scheme at Brazil's state-run oil giant, Petrobras, a case has also engulfed other top Brazil-

ian construction firms and leading lawmakers.

In his testimony, Silva denied any suggestion of impropriety in his activities, his foundation said.

"Lula stressed that he 'never interfered' in any contract concluded between the BNDES and private companies," the statement said, referring to the former leader by his nickname, as Silva is widely known in Brazil. "He always tried to

spread the word about these companies abroad, aiming to generate jobs and currency for Brazil."

The statement said that "ex-presidents from the whole world" assume similar roles, adding that "he also stressed that this was a source of pride for him."

Under Brazilian law, influence peddling to obtain advantages from a public servant or institution is illegal. □

Exiled opposition leader Rosales returns to Venezuela, is arrested

HANNAH DREIER
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— A Venezuelan opposition leader who had been living in self-imposed exile was arrested Thursday after returning to the socialist South American country. Former Gov. Manuel Rosales flew into Venezuela on Thursday after six years as a fugitive. Intelligence police met him at the airport and took him into custody. He was expected to appear in a Caracas court later in the day.

Before his arrest, Rosales vowed to continue fighting the country's 16-year-old socialist administration and urged Venezuelans to vote in Dec. 6 legislative elections. Authorities had warned him days earlier that he would be detained if he came back.

Rosales was governor of the western state of Zulia, where he returned Thursday. He ran for president in 2006 and lost to Hugo Chavez.

He went into exile in 2009, fleeing to Peru and then Panama after prosecutors accused him of stealing public money. He says the charges are false and politically motivated.

Supporters and other opposition leaders rallied near the airport Thursday. The country's main opposition groups immediately began denouncing his arrest as arbitrary and further evidence of a broken justice system. Last month, Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez was sentenced to more than 10 years in prison for his role in leading anti-government protests in 2014. □

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MEMBER OF 

Rihanna and Mick Jagger party as gold-rush mood grips Havana

M. WEISSENSTEIN
Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — By midnight, the basement of one of Havana's hottest clubs is packed wall-to-wall for a private concert by one of Cuba's biggest pop stars. Squeezed among the usual crowd of sleek young Cubans and paunchy, prowling European tourists, the owner of one of New York's hippest restaurants discusses his new Havana boutique hotel project. At the bar, a Swiss venture capitalist describes meeting with Communist Party officials about partnering on a marina complex. An Ohio woman who runs a bespoke guide service for wealthy Americans shows her clients iPhone photos of the private villa where they will have a waterfront paella dinner the next day. The foreigners visiting Havana used to be Canadians and Europeans on cheap beach package tours and left-leaning Americans on dutiful rounds of organic farms and neighborhood health clinics. Ten months after the U.S. and Cuba declared the end of a half-century of official hostility, the mood in Havana has changed.

The city is filled with celebrities coming to party and hedge-fund managers sizing up their chances to make millions in one of the last bastions of communism. As an influx of American cash starts feeling imminent and inevitable, there's a giddy, frothy feeling in the air, at least the air breathed by Havana's privileged. While most Cubans remain on the outside looking in, Havana's high society has a gold-rush, center-of-the-universe pulse that hasn't existed here since Fidel Castro stormed down from the mountains in 1959 and threw out the last

group of foreigners who saw Havana as their tropical playground.

"The next big bubble is going to be nightlife. That's what happened to Cancun," said Ziad Chamoun, a Boston-area restaurant and club owner turned wine importer who was drinking champagne in a waterfront villa on Sat-

urday afternoon with five friends, including the head of one of the world's largest emerging-market investment funds. "We're talking about doing a nightclub here, a high-energy Euro-house nightclub with DJs, VJs, laser shows, music, dancing," Chamoun said. "We want to be ahead of the curve, not behind it." In 2013, a quick jaunt to Cuba by Jay-Z and Beyonce outraged Republican lawmakers and set off a federal investigation. In recent weeks, the only reaction to visits by the rich and famous has been the sound of Cubans rushing to grab selfies with celebrities.

Mick Jagger and Katy Perry partied (separately) here over the last week. This month's Vanity Fair has Rihanna on the cover, shot by celebrity photographer Annie Leibowitz in Havana.

Mexico City's hottest chef is scoping out sites for a Havana restaurant. Usher and Ludacris have shown up. Jimmy Buffett played go to St Bart's (again), or Aspen (again)."

Hannah Berkeley Cohen first came to Cuba to study Marxism and Leninism on a study abroad program for the University of Pittsburgh. After working as a freelance journalist and guide for clients she describes as "lefty, self-identifying socialist Democrats from

wealthy Cubans spending many times in one night the roughly \$30 monthly salary of the average Cuban state worker. "This change is proving dramatic for a great majority, who had the mentality that everyone should have access to everything," said Octavio Borges Perez, a longtime cultural critic for the Cuban state news agency. "It's shocking for many people that you can now only get into certain places if you have spending power." Among the small world of academics and travel guides who focused on Cuba in the years before the declaration of detente, inside knowledge about the island's complexities was an obscure and not particularly profitable asset. Now America's experts on Cuba are re-branding themselves as blue-chip business consultants. Collin Laverty heads one of the best-known U.S. companies organizing the educational trips to Cuba permitted under U.S. rules barring pure tourism. In July, he created a new business called Havana Strategies to handle the growing demand for his investment consulting services.

Laverty said he's been flooded with calls from "everyone from folks that sell pipes to people that sell tractors to these cruise ship companies to folks that develop hotels, folks that develop triathlons and concerts. It's incredible, the interest across sectors."

Former Council on Foreign Relations Cuba expert Julia Sweig and Phil Peters, head of the Virginia-based Cuba Research Center, have founded D17 Strategies, a consulting firm named for the date on which Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro declared detente last December. □



Ralph Jaeger, Managing Director of Siguler & Guff, left, guide Hannah Berkeley, right, Joseph M. Majchrzak, a lawyer based in Massachusetts, second from right, and Chris Tosi, Co-owner of Pastene Companies Ltd, third from right, toast during a meal at a waterfront villa in Havana, Cuba. The city is filled with hedge-fund managers sizing up their chances to make millions in one of the last bastions of communism.

(AP Photo/Desmond Boylan)

a private backyard concert for friends. The tour companies showing the Americans around Cuba have sprouted investment consulting arms. And Cubans with money and foreign backers are furiously rehabbing old homes into micro-hotels complete with high-end restaurants and conference rooms for business meetings.

"New Years is the day all of Havana commemorates the Cuban Revolution," one North Palm Beach yacht charter broker wrote to clients last week in an emailed pitch for trips to Cuba. "Call today so you don't get stuck having to

New England," she now spends at least three weeks a month taking groups of moneyed Americans on rounds of Havana's clubs by night and crumbling housing stock in search of real-estate investment opportunities by day.

"The clientele now have the best new idea that will make millions in Cuba," Cohen said. "Everyone wants to get here before everyone else gets here."

The sprouting of high-end clubs and bars around Havana is unsettling to many in Cuba who grew up believing in equality as a tenet of the revolution, and now see foreigners and



Loyal Visitors Honored by the Aruba Tourism Authority!



PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a group of loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the Marriott Ocean Club and the Holiday Inn Resort as Distinguished Visitors and Goodwill Ambassadors. The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-

19 and 20-to-34 consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. John and Mrs. Terry Halsema of Burke, Virginia, Mr. Roger and Mrs. Esther Pinto of Peabody, Massachusetts, and Mr. Frank and Mrs. Ellen Dinardo of New York. The honorees are loyal members of the Marriott Ocean Club and the Holiday Inn Resort and they love Aruba very much because of



the friendly people, the weather, the beaches, the restaurants, and being on Aruba and is like being in paradise for them. The

certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel and Ms. Nadia Dabboussi representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with

Mr. Erwin Noquera GM of the Marriott Ocean Club, and Mrs. Adela and associates from the Holiday Inn Resort. □



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MOOMBA BEACH - It's going to be a wild, Wild West party, Halloween night at MooMba Beach. On Saturday, October 31st guns are drawn and feathers will fly, as the party theme is 'Haunted Cowboys and Indians.' Music is by Joyride from 7pm – 10pm and by DJ Alejandro from 10pm - 1am and there will be an all-night special on Wild West cocktails! Locals and visitors alike are invited to join all the Haunted Cowboys and Indians and have great fun mingling. Halloween is coming... be prepared to be scared!☐



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Team Aruba Finishes Up Another Successful Season

MEMPHIS, TN - With the IHRA World Finals in the books, Team Aruba puts the cap on another successful year with their 2011 Aruba.com Pro Stock Mustang. They finished seventh in national points standings overall, quite an accomplishment in the extremely tough Pro Stock division.

As car counts continue to increase in IHRA Pro Stock, each race qualifying becomes more of a challenge. Team Aruba earned their spot in the World Finals with an impressive 6.358 elapsed time at over 222 miles per hour. "We had the privilege of qualifying and racing with the world's best Pro Stock racers," stated Trevor Eman, driver of the Aruba.com Mustang. "IHRA Pro Stock has a nice, diversified group of racers from the U.S. and Canada and also with us from Aruba in there. It means a great deal to us just to be able to compete with such a talented group. The racing competition was very tough this year, but it's what racers have

come to expect from each other, and we couldn't be happier to do this anywhere other than on the IHRA quarter mile. At times certain races did not go as we would have wanted, but in between we had some races we were very happy with, including our final round appearance in Bradenton, Florida."

A major facet of the Team Aruba operation is promoting 'The One Happy Island' they call home. At each event Trevor and his team talk to fans and fellow racers about this paradise destination. Not only can they give first hand experience of Aruba, they help plan the perfect vacation through their travel partners.

"We are extremely proud to have represented our country, Aruba and our partners, www.Aruba.com and the Aruba Airport Authority in another successful year of racing, a successful year of getting to know new fans, and a successful year of getting more racers and fans to visit



Aruba," Eman continued. "We are also extremely proud of the hard work and efforts put out by our crew members. We have a great team in place with great chemistry. Aside from the fun of racing a vehicle at 220 miles per hour, the most fun is the time and laughs you get to spend with your crewmembers. We are lucky to have a good team in place."

"Jerry Haas built us a great car back into 2011, which is still going strong. Jerry has showed us pictures of the new model Mustang being built, but his shop built such a good car for us that it

would be difficult to trade it in just yet. The power under the hood of the Aruba.com Mustang has been tremendous this year. Jon Kaase knows what he's doing with these great big 820+ cubic inch motors when he builds them. We thank the entire gang at Jon Kaase Racing Engines for supplying us with a powerful engine. We look forward to them digging up some more HP's for the 2016 season."

With tens of thousands of miles under their belt this year alone, Team Aruba has earned a well-deserved break from travel and toil.

The Mustang will remain at the team's stateside base in South Carolina, while the Aruban team members head home for the winter.

"We'll settle down now a little bit at the season ending, but plans are already falling into place for next season," Eman expressed. "We are anxious to see what the 2016 IHRA race schedule is going to be like so we can start making our testing plans. On behalf of Team Aruba, we would like to congratulate the IHRA for a completed season, despite all the hardships with rain throughout the year and also all the 2015 champions. We look forward to doing this again and more in the upcoming 2016 race season."

Follow Team Aruba on Facebook and Twitter. Find race results, team updates, videos and photos. Also leave your comments to cheer on Team Aruba!

For more on your Aruba vacation visit www.Aruba.com. □

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Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa Celebrates Annual Green Week

EAGLE BEACH - Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa celebrated their Green Week this year from September 28 – October 3, 2015. The Green week kicked off on Monday afternoon, with an Opening Presentation about what Sustainability entails and the importance as this applies to the Three P's Balance (planet, people & profit), representing the relationship between the Global Environment & Society. We need to reduce the environmental impact of society to a level that the Earth's self recovering capability can deal with.

Meatless Monday luncheon followed at the resort cafeteria. The idea was simple: offer more options for meatless dining one day a week.

There are health benefits as well with meatless alternatives helps support a diet with more fiber and less saturated fat.

A presentation was also given by Hans Beverwijk, Director at Soap Oro and Emendo Eco Greenery, about different local products s.a. (Soaps, Papaya pepper, Jams, Aloe face products and much more produced right here in Aruba). Guest Speaker, Gisbert R. Boekhoudt, Government, Nature & Environment Director presented Government's vision and planning as this relates to sustainability on Aruba (green education, investments e.g.) & green initiatives Aruba was presently undertaking. Also explained the main focus on sharing sustainability



together, confronting the common barriers we face, identifying the solutions moving forward and creating the essential roadmaps to achieve desired growth paths of the sustainability journey for Aruba.

The Green week concluded with a Green Eco Walk in the morning & Afternoon at the Franse Pas Gold Mine Ruins thru the Mangroves leading to the two connecting bridges (old & new), followed by a

presentation & tour at Brouwerij Balashi and closure luncheon at Balashi Gardens.

Focus on this year's Green Week was to make sure that there were combined commitments from each

and everyone to local and sustainable aspects of food purchases and employee's meals, environmental vision as well as allowing us to contribute more to a number of related sustainability goals. □



In this Sept. 23, 2015, file photo, San Francisco Giants starting pitcher Jake Peavy works against a San Diego Padres batter during the first inning of a baseball game in San Diego.

Associated Press

California to big-league ballplayers: stop chewing tobacco

JOHN ROGERS
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — California lawmakers have taken the first step toward accomplishing something Major League Baseball could never do: Stop players from stuffing those big wads of chewing tobacco into their mouths during games.

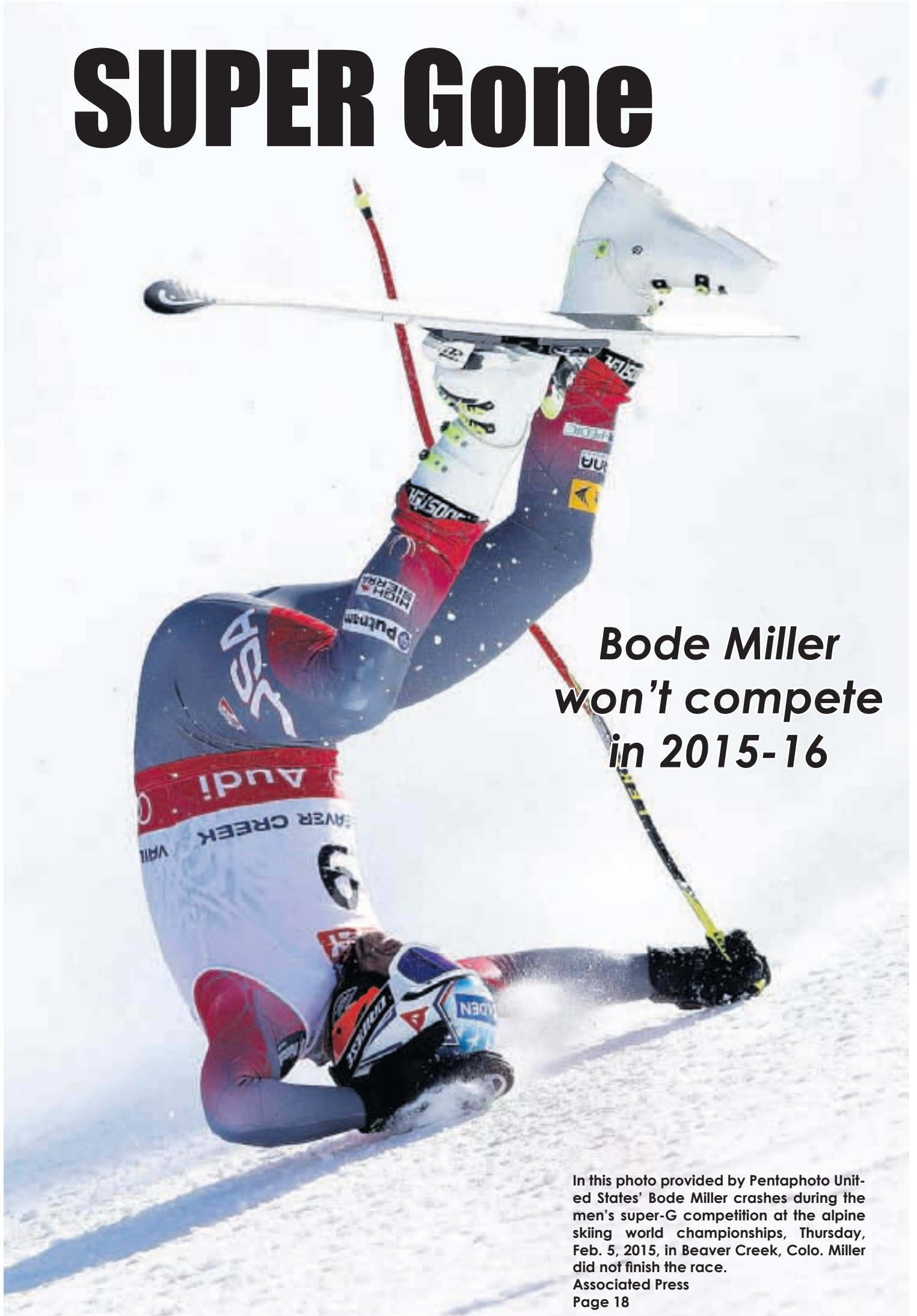
With Gov. Jerry Brown signing a bill earlier this week banning the use of smokeless tobacco in all California ballparks, the practice now seems headed toward the sport's endangered species list.

California has five of Major League teams and owners themselves have been pressing for a ban for years. Last May they got one in San Francisco.

In August they got another in Boston. And when Brown signed Assembly Bill 768 on Sunday one was already in the works for Los Angeles.

Major League Baseball still needs buy-in from the players, however, because the statewide ban that takes effect before next season has no provision for enforcement. □

SUPER Gone



Bode Miller won't compete in 2015-16

In this photo provided by Pentaphoto United States' Bode Miller crashes during the men's super-G competition at the alpine skiing world championships, Thursday, Feb. 5, 2015, in Beaver Creek, Colo. Miller did not finish the race.

Associated Press
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U.S. skier Bode Miller will skip 2015-16 World Cup circuit

PAT GRAHAM
AP Sports Writer

Bode Miller will leave all the racing this season to his horses.

The six-time Olympic medalist is taking a break from competing on the World Cup circuit to spend more time with his family, test out a new line of ski equipment and oversee a barn full of promising thoroughbreds he owns.

Don't read this as any sort of retirement, though. Not yet, anyway, even if Miller did turn 38 earlier this week. He's still keeping that door open, although he finds it "really unlikely" that he will be flying out of the starting gate at the 2018 Winter Games in South Korea.

"But it would be a cool thing to share with your kids, competing at a high level," Miller said in a phone interview with The Associated Press on Thursday. "And fitness-wise, my body feels excellent. You never know, but I would say it's really unlikely I'd go in '18."

Skiing took a backseat in May when he and his wife, pro beach volleyball player Morgan Beck Miller, welcomed a son.

"I haven't slept in 4 1/2 months," cracked Miller, who has two kids from previous relationships. "My priorities are so focused on the baby and family stuff. It's really hard to manage all the other stuff."

He's also getting more involved in projects such as training horses. He and a business partner own 15 horses and a barn in Mary-



In this Monday, Feb. 2, 2015 file photo, USA men's ski team member Bode Miller participates in a news conference, on the first day of the World Cup Ski Championships, in Beaver Creek, Colo.

Associated Press

land. Among his good friends is Bob Baffert, the trainer of Triple Crown winner American Pharoah.

"Our program is a super, super elite training program," Miller said. "It's training, but you can't really call it training. In ski racing, it's conditioning. That's what we're doing — conditioning the (the horses) mentally and physically to compete."

One of his horses is Ravenheart, which will compete this weekend at the Maryland Million Nursery. He picked out Ravenheart — saw the potential in him — and named him after his

favorite fantasy novel.

"Each one of these horses is like my kid," Miller said. "When you really invest yourself and your energy into an animal, you're much more invested in the outcome. It hurts more when they lose or when they hurt themselves. But you get a lot more when they win."

Miller has captured 33 World Cup races and two overall titles. He's also earned three Olympic silver medals and two bronze to go with the gold in the super-combined at the 2010 Vancouver Games.

Fitness-wise, Miller said he "feels excellent." He had surgery last November to fix a herniated disk in his back and didn't return until the world championships three months later in Beaver Creek, Colorado. He crashed during the super-G and severed his right hamstring tendon.

Miller skied in Europe and Chile over the summer with no trouble — or hint of pain. "My hamstring seems to have no real impact on my ability to ski and my body feels great," said Miller. "My back feels fine. In terms of that, everything feels

great."

Miller split from his sponsor Head and joined Bomber Ski, a company he's collaborating with that makes handcrafted skis in a race lab in Italy.

U.S. men's coach Sasha Rearick doesn't think the world has seen the last of Miller on a race hill. Far from it.

"He's Bode Miller. He loves it. He loves expressing himself on snow," Rearick recently said. "He loves pushing the limits. If he's got a new challenge, find something fun for him, he's going to go full at it." □

Tom Brady on Deflategate, Gisele and Donald Trump

JOHN CARUCCI
Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP)

— Tom Brady has four Super Bowl rings, is a future Hall of Famer and his New England Patriots are off to a 4-0 start, yet he's still quick to mention his 199th rank in the draft more than a decade ago as motivation for excellence.

After the high of winning the Super Bowl, the National Football League tried to suspend him for four games over his role in the deflation of game balls in a playoff game against the Indianapolis Colts. Brady, who denied wrongdoing, successfully appealed in time for the start of the season. While it certainly provided more fuel for Brady's critics, he remains one of the most popular athletes in the world, thanks to his golden-boy persona (being married to supermodel Gisele Bundchen doesn't hurt).

The quarterback, who recently signed on as a pitchman for Tag Heuer with the motto "Don't Break Under Pressure," says it's the past failures that have fueled his success: "These challenging experiences that have been the best things I've ever had to deal with."

Brady talked to The Associated Press this week about why he doesn't let critics get under his skin, his relationship with his wife and his friendship with Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump.

Associated Press: Sunday you're playing the Indianapolis Colts. After all you've been through this entire year, is it vindication to play them?

Brady: I approach every week the same. I think I've always tried to be very professional to how I approach the game, my preparation. Every game is important. We only get 16 of them. We've had a great rivalry with that team. They've got a good team this year, they won three straight, so I'm excited to see what we can do in the game. What

more can you ask?

AP: You were almost suspended because of Deflategate. Does that figure in at all?

Brady: It really doesn't. Whether that was the case or not, it's not going to make any difference on Sunday night.

AP: Your relationship with Gisele is always under scrutiny. How do you put all that aside?

Brady: Well, you compartmentalize. You owe that to your teammates. They gotta do the same thing. Everyone is dealing with something. This is life; this is not just a piece of cake. You expect that when your teammates are doing their jobs, so you got to compartmentalize and do your job. I've tried that over a long period of time; it's tried and tested. That's something you take a lot of pride in. You put all the other stuff aside and go out and do your job, and mine is to be the best I can be for my teammates.

AP: At 38, you're playing quarterback in the NFL at a high level. How much longer do you see yourself playing?

Brady: I've got a lot of football left. ... Football is a contact sport and there's a lot that goes into it. But I have committed myself for a long time to doing it, and

because I love doing it so much I want to make that commitment.

AP: Were you bothered by (Dallas Cowboys) Greg Hardy's comment (about wanting to see Gisele)?

Brady: No, I've been around for a long time, I've seen it all. He's not the first person that makes comments that don't have anything to do with the game. I put them aside and I go about my business. If you waste your time and energy on things that don't matter in the outcome of the game, then when you get to the game you're not going to give your teammates the best that you have to offer.



New England Patriots quarterback and newly-named brand ambassador, Tom Brady, holds a football at a TAG Heuer product launch at Spring Studios on Tuesday, Oct. 13, 2015, in New York.

Associated Press

AP: As far as your non-endorsement endorsement of Donald Trump, what do you say about that?

Brady: (Laughs.) He's been

a long-time friend of mine, so we played a lot of golf over the years. He's invited me many times to some of his great golf resorts. □

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NHL Capsules

Flyers G Neuirth stops 30 shots in 3-0 win

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Michal Neuirth stopped 30 shots in his second straight shutout, leading the Philadelphia Flyers to a 3-0 win over the Chicago Blackhawks on Wednesday night.

Sam Gagner, Claude Giroux and Matt Read scored to lead the Flyers to their 12th straight regular-season home victory over Chicago. The Flyers have not lost to the Blackhawks in Philly during the regular season since Nov. 9, 1996. The Blackhawks beat the Flyers in the 2010 Stanley Cup Final and clinched with a Game 6 win in Philly. Filling in for Steve Mason, Neuirth was sensational in his ninth career shutout. Mason missed a second straight game because of unspecified family reasons and there was no word when he would return.

COYOTES 4, DUCKS 0

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Anthony Duclair scored the game's first two goals en route to his first career hat trick and Mike Smith made 37 saves for his 28th career shutout to lead Arizona. Rookie Max Domi had a goal and an assist and Martin Hanzal had three assists

for the Coyotes, who are off to a 3-0 start for the first time since 2003-04. Last season they lost 50 games for the only time since the franchise relocated from Winnipeg to Arizona for the 1996-97 campaign.

Duclair, who had only one goal in 20 previous NHL games, completed his hat trick on a short wrist shot at 10:57 of the second period. The 20-year-old left wing was acquired last March in a multiplayer trade that sent defenseman Keith Yandle to the New York Rangers.

BRUINS 6, AVALANCHE 2

DENVER (AP) — Jimmy Hayes had a goal and three assists, Jonas Gustavsson stopped 20 shots and Boston avoided its worst start in more than 50 years.

The Bruins raced out to a 5-0 lead by the second period and cruised from there to end a three-game slide. Kevan Miller and Hayes scored 2:22 apart in the first period, with Tyler Randall, Chris Kelly and Ryan Spooner scoring in the second. Spooner's goal with

4:28 remaining in the second ended a rough evening for Semyon Varlamov, who stopped 14 of 19 shots before being relieved by Reto Berra. David Krejci added an empty-net goal with 1:29 left. Gabriel Landeskog had a power-play goal and John

Mitchell added another for Colorado.

SENATORS 7, BLUE JACKETS 3

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Bobby Ryan and Mika Zibanejad each had a goal and two assists, Erik Karlsson added a career-high four assists, and Ottawa improved to 3-0-0 on the road for the first time since the start of the 2007-08 season.

Kyle Turris had a goal and an assist, and Marc Methot, Milan Michalek, Jean-Gabriel Pageau and Mike Hoffman also scored for

the Senators. Mark Stone had two assists and Craig Anderson made 37 saves. Brandon Saad, Boone Jenner and Brandon Dubinsky scored for Columbus and Ryan Johansen had two assists. The Blue Jackets have dropped their first four games in regulation for the first time in the franchise's 15-year history.

Former Vezina Trophy winner Sergei Bobrovsky came in with a 4.65 goals-against-average and was shaky from the start, finishing with just 21 saves. □



Philadelphia Flyers goalie Michal Neuirth, center, of Czech Republic knocks the puck away from Chicago Blackhawks center Jonathan Toews, right, with right wing Patrick Kane, left, behind them during the third period of a hockey game, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2015, in Philadelphia. The Flyers won 3-0.

Associated Press

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Djokovic wins again in Shanghai; Nadal, Murray also advance



Andy Murray of Britain celebrates after defeated John Isner of the United States in his second round of the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament in Shanghai, China, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015.

Associated Press

JUSTIN BERGMAN

Associated Press

SHANGHAI (AP) — Novak Djokovic has been winning with relative ease over the past week and a half in China and yet he still doesn't think his game is perfect.

His opponents might like to disagree.

Djokovic defeated 15th-seeded Feliciano Lopez 6-2, 6-3 to reach the quarterfinals of the Shanghai Masters on Thursday, extending his winning streak to 14 straight matches dating back to his title run at the U.S. Open.

He's also captured 16 straight sets, and hasn't surrendered more than five games in a single match since the start of the China Open last week.

"He's already the toughest player to play right now in the game," Lopez said. "No doubt about that. It's something very obvious."

On a day when 14 of the world's top 17 players were playing, Andy Mur-

ray saved all seven break points he faced and held on to beat big-serving John Isner 6-7 (4), 6-4, 6-4; Rafael Nadal defeated Canada's Milos Raonic 6-3, 7-6 (3); and Stan Wawrinka topped Marin Cilic 7-5, 6-7 (7), 6-4.

Sixth-seeded Kei Nishikori of Japan, meanwhile, was upset by South Africa's Kevin Anderson 7-6 (10), 7-6 (3).

Lopez, who lost to Djokovic in the quarterfinals of last month's U.S. Open, tried to disrupt the Serbian star's rhythm by serving and volleying and using a variety of drop shots, sliced backhands and sharp angles.

Djokovic, however, played a superb defensive game and continually scrambled after Lopez's shots for winners. During one point in the second set, Lopez chased down a volley and hit an angled shot around the post into the open court only to watch Djokovic stab at the ball and float a lob over his head that

dropped on the line.

After the match, the Serbian player said that even though he's been winning so convincingly in China, he still sees room for improvement.

"I still believe there are shots in my game that can be better," he said. "I think that's one of the things that keeps me going. It motivates me to play more."

Murray had won all four of his previous encounters with Isner, but they all went to three sets — and this one was no different.

Isner had multiple break chances in the match, including two when Murray was serving for the second set. The Scot saved the first break point with a drop shot and the second with a second-serve ace up the middle that caught Isner flat-footed. The American was so angry, he ripped off his hat and flung it to the ground.

It was his ninth straight loss to top-10 opponents.

"It's disappointing be-

cause I did have some chances and I didn't take them," Isner said. "If I want to take that next step, I've got to do that, and I didn't. And it's happened a lot." Nadal also had a lengthy losing streak against elite players, but he managed to turn his around against the ninth-seeded Raonic. He had lost his last five matches — and 11 straight sets — to top-10 opponents going back to May.

"Today I feel that I am not playing with the nerves when I am on court," Nadal said. "I am able to enjoy."

In other matches, Tomas Berdych defeated Gilles Simon, last year's Shanghai runner-up, 6-3, 6-3; and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga advanced with a 6-7 (5), 7-5, 6-4 win over Spanish qualifier Albert Ramos-Vinolas, who ousted Roger Federer in the second round. □

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Lynx capture 3rd title in 5 years with 69-52 win

JON KRAWCZYNSKI
AP Basketball Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Powered by a suffocating defense and a yearning to celebrate in front of their loyal fans, Minnesota comfortably beat Indiana 69-52 on Wednesday to clinch a third WNBA title in five years.

Sylvia Fowles had 20 points and 11 rebounds, Seimone Augustus added 16 points and Rebekkah Brunson grabbed 14 rebounds for the Lynx, who also won it all in 2011 and 2013.

Maya Moore scored just five points on 1-for-8 shooting, but the Lynx forced 21 turnovers and held Indiana to 35.7 percent shooting in the league's first Game 5 decider since 2009.

Tamika Catchings had 18 points and 11 rebounds for Indiana, which was chasing a second championship.

Finally, the Lynx got to celebrate on their home court. They won their first two titles on the road in Atlanta, forcing the success-starved Twin Cities sports fans to revel from afar. When the final buzzer sounded, a franchise-record 18,933 fans waved white towels while singer Prince watched from a suite above Target Center's lower bowl.

Augustus shed tears of joy after a throwback performance. Owner Glen Taylor hugged coach Cheryl Reeve, and Moore leaped on to the scorer's table and pumped

pable Fever, who had staved off elimination five straight times in these playoffs leading into Game 5.

Briann January and Catchings helped turn Indiana into a

In the second and third quarters, the Fever scored 12 points total and turned the ball over 17 times.

Star guard January scored six points in the first quarter for

Stephanie White said. "They looked like a team that was on a mission and they played like it."

The game got off to an ugly start, with the Lynx slugging out a 27-21 lead at halftime in the lowest-scoring first half in finals history. Neither team could hit a shot or hold on to the ball, and Moore was held to just three points on 1-for-5 shooting.

The Lynx kept the defense set to stifling in the second half, but finally started to generate a little offense in the third to gradually pull away.

The Fever stunned the heavily favored Lynx in 2012, beating them at home in Game 1 and finishing them off back home in Indiana to dethrone the champions. The Lynx came back to win it in 2013 before losing to Phoenix in the Western Conference finals last year.

The march to their third championship was harder than ever, with Lindsay Whalen and Augustus missing big chunks of time with injuries and a style-altering trade that brought Fowles to the post midseason.

"Wasn't a perfect year, perfect series or a perfect game," Moore said. "But we're champions." □



Minnesota Lynx forward Maya Moore from left, forward Rebekkah Brunson and Renee Montgomery (21) celebrate against the Indiana Fever in the second half of Game 5 of the WNBA basketball finals, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2015, in Minneapolis. **Associated Press**

her fists toward the crowd. "We kept grinding and working despite everything that we've been through," Augustus said.

It was a stunning collapse for the previously unflap-

tough, confident bunch that erased an 18-point deficit to beat the New York Liberty in Game 2 of the Eastern Conference finals, but finally ran into a wall they couldn't break through.

Indiana, but didn't get her next bucket until six minutes were gone in the third. She finished with 13 points on 6-for-15 shooting.

"They just outplayed us in every single way," Fever coach



Vancouver Whitecaps goalkeeper David Ousted can't stop the shot allowing a goal by FC Dallas Michael Barrios, not shown, during the first half of an MLS soccer game Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2015, in Frisco, Texas.

Associated Press

The Associated Press
TORONTO (AP) — Toronto sealed its first playoff berth in Major League Soccer and kept alive its hopes of overtaking New York for top spot in the Eastern Conference by beating the Red Bulls 2-1 on Wednesday, with Italy international Se-

bastian Giovinco scoring his 22nd goal of the season. The Canadian club moved within five points of New York with two games to play in the regular season. Dallas moved closer to sealing top spot in the Western Conference by beating third-placed Van-

couver 2-0. The Texan team is now four points clear of the Whitecaps, and three above second-placed Los Angeles.

In the day's other game, Portland picked up a valuable 1-0 win at Real Salt Lake to move into sixth — the last playoff-yielding spot — in the West.

Toronto's Giovinco sent a charge through the crowd of 18,143 when he stepped past a slew of Red Bulls defenders before firing a shot into the right side of the net in the 78th minute. The star striker flew back to Canada hours after playing a Euro 2016 qualifier for Italy.

MLS Roundup

Toronto seals playoff berth with win over New York

Hercules Gomez had scored in the 51st minute for Toronto, which has won four straight games.

Shaun Wright-Phillips pulled a goal back for New York in the 86th minute.

Dallas' Mauro Diaz scored one goal and set up another in the 2-0 home win against Vancouver.

Michael Barrios opened the scoring in the 32nd minute. He drew a penalty 10 minutes later, but Diaz's spot-kick was denied by David Ousted.

Diaz made it 2-0 in the 52nd after a nice individual effort. Ousted got a hand on the shot but it found the

back of the net.

Vancouver is winless in five games and is now at long odds of finishing in the top two in the West, and thereby getting a bye in the first round of playoffs.

Portland's Fanendo Adi converted a penalty in the 54th minute and that was enough for the Timbers to win 1-0 at ten-man Real Salt Lake.

Jamison Olave was given a straight red card in the 52nd minute for taking down Lucas Melano in a goal-scoring position. Goalkeeper Nick Rimando picked the wrong direction on Adi's penalty kick. □

Despite exposure, new nations joining cyberespionage game

RAPHAEL SATTER
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Researchers say some smaller, poorer nations are now using spy software, suggesting that recent data leaks and lawsuits have not deterred governments from investing in off-the-shelf cyberespionage products.

Internet watchdog group Citizen Lab said in a report Thursday that it had found 33 “likely government users” of FinFisher, one of the world’s best-known purveyors of spyware. A report released separately by London-based Privacy International on Thursday said the same spyware had seen use in Uganda to hack, intimidate and blackmail members of the opposition.

Business appears good for FinFisher, despite a damaging hack last year which exposed reams of client information and other confidential data.

“They seem to have a healthy client base, despite the fact that they were hacked and customer data was exposed,” Citizen Lab’s Bill Marczak wrote in an email. “Far from observing a drop in FinFisher servers, we’re detecting more than ever before.”

FinFisher did not return messages seeking com-



In this Oct. 13, 2014, file photo, pro-democracy activists, from left, Moosa Abd-Ali Ali, Saeed Al-Shehabi and Jaafar Al Hasabi listen during a news conference in London.

ment on the findings.

Like many malicious programs, FinFisher’s products work by infecting their targets’ computers and phones, copying messages, recording conversations and even activating webcams.

On its website, the Munich-based company says the spyware helps law enforcement and intelligence agencies bring criminals to justice. Among the documents leaked last year was a brochure touting the software’s success

in breaking up organized crime and human-trafficking rings, but FinFisher’s tools have also been found spying on journalists, human rights defenders and lawyers.

Privacy International’s report said FinFisher had been deployed against opponents of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni during 2012 protests against his government. The advocacy group published what it said was a leaked Ugandan presidential briefing which boasted

that “hordes of data” had been gathered by the spyware.

One objective, the seven-page briefing said, was “to manage and control the media houses and opposition politicians, which in the worst case scenario, may involve blackmailing them especially after personal information is in our hands.”

The briefing, marked “SECRET,” went on to say that FinFisher’s tools had been deployed in hotels, government agencies and even

the country’s parliament. “Impudent opposition politicians” were among the spyware’s top targets, the memo said.

There was no immediate way to independently authenticate the briefing, although Privacy International has a record of publishing genuine material about surveillance companies’ operations. Ugandan government spokesman Ofwono Opondo did immediately respond to calls for comment.

Hacking impudent opponents doesn’t come cheap. Among the documents leaked last year was a price list suggesting that a suite of FinFisher products — including a full set of attack software, booby-trapped thumb drives and nearly a dozen different training courses — retailed for some 3 million euros (\$3.5 million.) That price tag doesn’t seem to have put off Uganda or other government agencies in Paraguay, Kenya, Macedonia and Bangladesh. The latter were four were among the countries newly identified as likely users of FinFisher by Citizen Lab, which is based at the University of Toronto’s Munk School of Global Affairs and has long kept tabs on government hacking. □

Associated Press

Yahoo’s updated email app aims to kill the password

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Yahoo is trying to phase out passwords with an update to its mobile application for its email service.

The renovated app released Thursday for iPhones and Android devices will include an option called “Account Key” that allows people to sign into their email accounts by pressing on a notification sent to their smartphones instead of typing in a password.

Yahoo believes the new feature will be more secure because most people rely on passwords that are easy for hackers to guess. Yahoo’s email users can still continue to type in a pass-

word if they prefer.

The Sunnyvale, California, company wants to change the way Internet security works because Yahoo “is synonymous with the Internet in many countries,” said Jeff Bonforte, the company’s senior vice president of communication products. “We always feel a burden of consumer protection.”

Although Yahoo email remains among the world’s most popular, it has been eclipsed in recent years by Google’s Gmail. Yahoo’s email had 190 million users in August, a 16 percent decline from the same time last year, according to the

research firm comScore. Gmail boasted 411 million, a 5 percent increase.

The updated app also will make it possible to connect Yahoo email with competing services from Outlook.com, Hotmail and AOL. The company hopes to make the app work with Gmail eventually, though it isn’t giving a timetable for making it happen.

An update to the Gmail app earlier this year allowed its users to connect with Yahoo email and Microsoft’s Outlook.com.

The app update is important to Yahoo Inc. because more than half of its email users primarily check



This Jan. 14, 2015 photo shows a sign outside Yahoo’s headquarters in Sunnyvale, Calif. Yahoo is trying to phase out passwords with an update to its mobile application for its email service.

Associated Press

their messages on mobile devices. Email users also are an important source of traffic at Yahoo’s other major services, including sports, entertainment and finance that help sell the advertising that generates

most of the company’s revenue.

Yahoo’s revenue has been declining or barely growing for years as advertisers pour more of their money into Google and Facebook. □

US stocks advance; Citigroup gains on strong earnings

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Financial stocks surged on Thursday, helping push the market to its biggest gain in almost two weeks.

Citigroup jumped after reporting that its earnings rose sharply in the third quarter as the bank continued to cut expenses and clean up its books in the wake of the financial crisis. KeyCorp also climbed after posting solid earnings.

The reports cheered investors, who have been looking for good news to boost stocks since a summer sell-off roiled the markets. However, the optimism may be short-lived. Third-quarter earnings are forecast to contract overall as falling energy prices and weak global demand start to eat into profits.

"Financials could be the bright spot of the whole earnings season, so let the market have its fun," said Karyn Cavanaugh, senior market strategist at Voya Investment Financial. "We'll take any bright spot we can get in this earnings season, because things really don't look good."

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 29.62 points, or 1.5 percent, to 2,023.86. That was the biggest one-day gain for the index since Oct. 5.

The Dow Jones industrial average climbed 217 points, or 1.3 percent, to 17,141.75. The Nasdaq composite rose 87.25 points, or 1.8 percent, to 4,870.10.

Earnings for companies in the S&P 500 are forecast to

drop 5 percent in the third quarter, according to S&P Capital IQ. If earnings do end up lower, it would be the first time in six years they have contracted.

On Thursday, financial stocks climbed 2.3 percent,

in August and September. After a run of weak economic reports in the last month, many investors now think the Fed will keep interest rates unchanged for the rest of the year. Fed policymakers have kept the

what's going to happen with the Fed, if we see that happen again."

Netflix was among the day's biggest losers.

The stock slumped \$9.14, or 8.3 percent, to \$101.09 after the company reported



First Data Corp. Chairman & CEO Frank Bisignano rings a ceremonial bell as his company's IPO begins trading on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015. First data is the leading payment services provider to the e-commerce industry.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

the most among the 10 sectors that make up the S&P 500. Citigroup climbed \$2.25, or 4.4 percent, to \$52.97, and KeyCorp rose 60 cents, or 4.7 percent, to \$13.31.

Stocks have started October with a strong rally after closing out September with their worst quarterly performance in four years. Worries about the Chinese economy and the possibility of a Federal Reserve rate increase shook the market

bank's benchmark lending rate close to zero for almost seven years, supporting a bull market in stocks.

The outlook for interest rates will likely hold the key for how stocks perform for the rest of the year, said Sean Lynch, co-head of global equity strategy at Wells Fargo Investment Institute.

"Last year, we had a pretty good rally into year end," Lynch said. "I wouldn't be surprised, should people get a clear indication of

late Wednesday that it is hooking fewer U.S. viewers than it hoped.

First Data, an electronic payment company based in Atlanta, raised \$2.6 billion in an initial public offering, making it the biggest listed IPO of the year so far, according to data provider Dealogic. The stock priced at \$16, but closed down 25 cents, or 1.6 percent.

In metals trading, gold rose \$7.70 to \$1,187.50 an ounce. □

UnitedHealth again looks to fast-growing businesses over 3Q

TOM MURPHY
AP Business Writer

UnitedHealth Group's third-quarter profit slipped, but the nation's largest health insurer still beat Wall Street expectations due partly to fast growth in pharmacy benefits management and other areas outside its core business.

Revenue from the Minneapolis company's Optum unit, which runs prescription drug coverage, jumped 61 percent to \$19.3 billion after UnitedHealth bought Catamaran, a pharmacy benefits manager, in a deal valued at more than \$12 billion.

Health insurance is the company's primary business, but it has been relying more on Optum for growth. That segment also provides technology services, helps the government with its health care overhaul coverage expansion and runs clinics and doctor's offices. Its operating earnings soared 32 percent to \$1.14 billion in the quarter.

Overall, UnitedHealth's earnings fell less than 1 percent to nearly \$1.6 billion, or \$1.65 per share, in the three months that ended Sept. 30. That compares with earnings of \$1.6 billion, or \$1.63 per share, in last year's quarter, when the company had more shares outstanding.

Revenue surged 27 percent to \$41.49 billion.

UnitedHealth's bottom line exceeded expectations. Analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research projected, on average, earnings of \$1.64 per share on \$41.49 billion in revenue.

Leerink analyst Ana Gupte said in a research note that the quarter "does not raise any red flags and sets up for a solid 2016."

The insurer, which has expanded internationally in recent years, said total enrollment grew 2.5 percent to 46.1 million people compared to last year's quarter. Costs tied to the Catamaran deal and rising medical expenses contributed to a 29 percent jump in operating expenses. □

Yum names activist to board, lowers profit outlook

NEW YORK (AP) — Yum Brands said it named activist investor Keith Meister to its board and lowered its full-year profit outlook, citing ongoing difficulties in its China division.

The parent company of KFC, Pizza Hut and Taco Bell also said Thursday it was close to completing a review of its strategic options, including potential changes to its corporate structure. The announcement came after Yum Brands re-

ported disappointing quarterly results last week, citing a slower-than-expected recovery for its Chinabusiness, which have seen sales plunge after two separate scares related to the quality of its food.

Meister is the founder and managing partner of Corvex Management, one of Yum's largest shareholders with nearly 5 percent of the company's common stock. His appointment expands the board to 14 members

and is effective Friday. Meister previously worked with another well known activist investor, Carl Icahn. Meister said in a statement that his fund has had a "constructive dialogue" with the board and management over the past several months.

Yum now expects its full-year earnings per share to be flat to up in the low-single-digit percentages. Last week, it had said it expected growth in the low-single-

digit percentages. Sales at established locations in China are expected to be flat to up 4 percent. Last week, it had forecast mid-single digit growth.

The company said its updated profit outlook also reflects unfavorable currency exchange rates.

To keep investors updated on its performance in China, Yum said it will begin reporting monthly sales again for the division starting Nov. 12. □

Citigroup's earnings surge 36 percent, beating estimates

KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Citigroup said Thursday its earnings jumped 36 percent in the third quarter as the bank continued to cut expenses and clean up its books in the wake of the financial crisis.

The New York-based bank earned \$3.99 billion, or \$1.31 per share, excluding payments to preferred shareholders and an ac-

counting adjustment, for the three-month period ending in September. That compares with earnings of \$2.94 billion, or 95 cents a share, in the same period a year earlier.

Citi's latest earnings beat analysts' estimates of \$1.27 a share, according to FactSet.

Citi has been on a multi-year mission to recover from its near collapse during the financial crisis, and

2015 has been a year of significant progress.

Citi Holdings, the firm's so-called "bad bank" where it stores all its troubled assets, made a profit for the fifth straight quarter. The firm passed the Federal Reserve's "stress tests" earlier this year and legal expenses this quarter were \$376 billion, down from \$1.6 billion a year earlier.

"I feel good about the quality and consistency

of our earnings over the course of this year, as we have continued to make solid progress against our core priorities," Michael Corbat, CEO of Citigroup, said in a statement.

Most of Citi's major businesses saw revenue declines this quarter, but those were mostly offset by lower expenses. Overall expenses fell 18 percent to \$10.67 billion from \$12.96 billion a year earlier, most-

ly because legal costs fell sharply.

Citicorp, the bank's consumer and corporate banking division, had net income of \$4.26 billion in the period excluding an accounting adjustment, up from \$2.82 billion a year earlier.

Overall, Citi's revenue was \$18.5 billion after the accounting adjustment, compared with \$20.06 billion the year before. □

Goldman Sachs earnings fall 38 percent, missing forecasts

KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Goldman Sachs posted as a 38 percent drop in earnings in the third quarter on Thursday, missing analysts estimates, as the Wall Street bank was hurt by recent market turbulence and lower commodity prices.

Goldman said it had net income of \$1.33 billion after payments to preferred shareholders, or \$2.90 a share, down from \$2.14 billion, or \$4.57 a share, in the same period a year ago.

Net revenue at the investment bank dropped by 18 percent to \$6.86 billion from \$8.39 billion a year earlier. "We experienced lower levels of activity and declining asset prices during the quarter, reflecting renewed concerns about global economic growth," CEO Lloyd Blankfein said in a prepared statement.

It was widely expected that Goldman would report a drop in profit for the third quarter given the recent

market turbulence and sell-off in commodity prices. Goldman does not have a consumer banking business, and makes its money providing financial advice to companies and high net worth individuals, as well as a significant stock, bonds, and commodities trading operation.

Net revenue in Goldman's fixed income, currency and commodities business was \$1.46 billion this quarter, down a third from a year earlier.

Goldman's lending and investing business, the firm's own investments, also took a hit this quarter, posting revenue of \$670 million, down 60 percent from a year ago. The firm said its investments "were negatively impacted by a significant decrease in global equity prices."

One positive note in Goldman's results was its investment banking division, which saw a 6 percent increase in net revenue from a year ago. The amount



A screen at a trading post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange is juxtaposed with the Goldman Sachs booth. The Goldman Sachs Group Inc. reported quarterly financial results Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

of money Goldman made in advising companies through mergers and acquisitions, one of the firm's highest profile businesses, was \$809 million in the quarter, up 36 percent.

Not surprisingly, the firm's employee compensation

levels shrank, a reflection that Goldman employees are largely paid in bonuses and for performance. The amount of money Goldman set aside for compensation was \$2.35 billion in the quarter, down 16 percent from a year ago.

The results did not meet Wall Street expectations. The average estimate of eight analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research was for earnings of \$2.94 per share. Revenue also did not meet analysts' expectations of \$7.29 billion. □

Philip Morris 3Q results top Wall Street as prices climb

NEW YORK (AP) — Philip Morris' third-quarter adjusted profit and revenue topped analysts' estimates, bolstered in part by increased cigarette prices.

The seller of Marlboro and other cigarette brands outside the United States also narrowed its full-year earnings forecast on Thursday. Its shares rose in morning trading.

Quarterly revenue, excluding excise taxes, dropped 12 percent to \$6.93 billion

thanks to unfavorable foreign currency translation. The results still beat Wall Street's view.

Four analysts surveyed by Zacks expected revenue of \$6.75 billion.

Since Philip Morris does all of its business overseas, the New York company has to navigate changes in currency values. A stronger dollar cuts into revenue generated overseas when it's translated back into dollars.

CEO Andre Calantzopoulos said in a written statement that higher prices helped the quarter's performance, while economic conditions improved, particularly in the European Union and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Cigarette shipment volume fell 1.5 percent to 218.9 billion units, excluding acquisitions. Philip Morris said that this was primarily due to Asia, mainly Indonesia, Japan and Pakistan.

Marlboro cigarette shipment volume rose 2.1 percent on growth in the European Union, Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

For the period ended Sept. 30, Philip Morris International Inc. earned \$1.94 billion, or \$1.25 per share. That compares with \$2.16 billion, or \$1.38 per share, a year ago. Excluding pretax gains, earnings were \$1.24 per share.

The results surpassed ana-

lysts' expectations. The average estimate of six analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research was for earnings of \$1.11 per share. The company now foresees full-year earnings in a range of \$4.35 to \$4.40 per share. Its prior outlook was for \$4.32 to \$4.42 per share. Analysts polled by FactSet predict earnings of \$4.38 per share.

Its shares rose \$1.07, or 1.3 percent, to \$85.55 in morning trading Thursday. □

Mutts



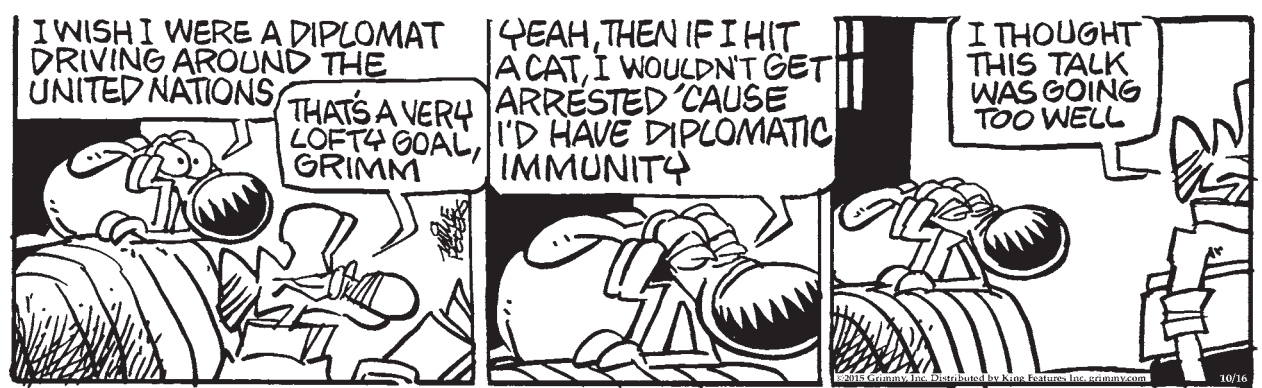
6 Chix



Blondie



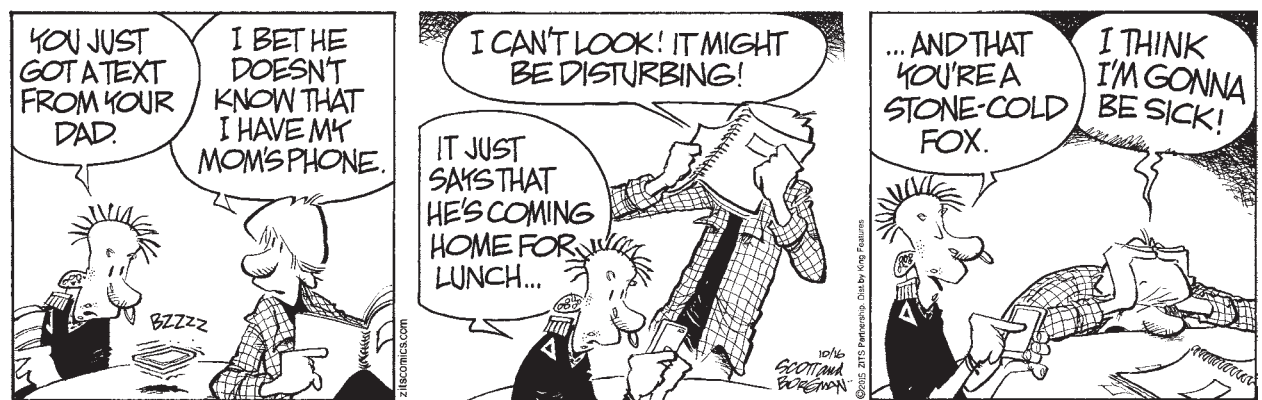
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

					7			
	1	2	3			8	5	
				8				
6				5			3	
		3	4		8	1		
	5			1				9
				7				
	8	9			2	4	1	
			6					

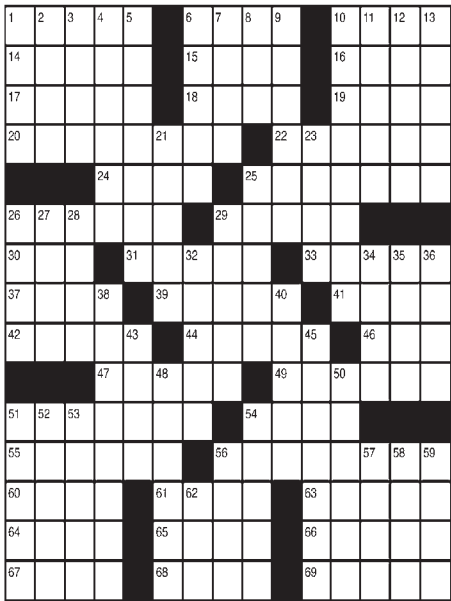
Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 10/16

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

4	1	7	8	9	6	2	3	5
3	6	9	2	5	4	7	1	8
8	5	2	7	3	1	6	9	4
7	2	3	9	6	8	4	5	1
9	8	1	4	2	5	3	6	7
5	4	6	3	1	7	8	2	9
1	7	5	6	8	2	9	4	3
2	9	8	1	4	3	5	7	6
6	3	4	5	7	9	1	8	2

ACROSS

- 1 Popeye's love
- 6 Gopher
- Mickelson
- 10 Peanut butter containers
- 14 Sinful habits
- 15 Acting part
- 16 Come __; find
- 17 Happy __; birth of a baby, e.g.
- 18 BPOE members
- 19 Commanded
- 20 Blushed
- 22 Evening party
- 24 Baker's need
- 25 House buyer's agent
- 26 Jackson or Carnegie
- 29 __ firma; dry land
- 30 Whopper
- 31 Striped animal
- 33 Try to catch a whiff of
- 37 Elderly
- 39 Train tracks
- 41 __-free; like an 800 number
- 42 __ off; disregard
- 44 Skateboarder's inclines
- 46 Foot digit
- 47 Can wrapper
- 49 Blockbuster animated film
- 51 Delayed on purpose
- 54 Swiss capital
- 55 Pressed clothes
- 56 Combative; ready to fight
- 60 Golf course cry
- 61 Rosary piece
- 63 Money hoarder
- 64 Tricycle riders
- 65 Egg on
- 66 Babble
- 67 Mineral springs
- 68 Broad smile
- 69 In a __; sort of



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 10/16/15

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

ILLS	ASSES	LARK
NOAH	STUNT	OVEN
NINE	SIEGE	CAFE
SNEAKER	IMPASSE	
VET	ONSET	
PREEN	APE	KEACH
LABS	BLT	CODDLE
ABS	RESIDUE	DAN
IBERIA	CAB	HEIR
DINES	SAM	GERMY
FERAL	MIA	
INSURED	HANDBAG	
TOOT	ADIEU	WISE
SOLE	RENAL	ADAM
ANDS	SNAPS	YENS

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- 38 Tedium
- 40 Salesman's pitch
- 43 Hurricane wind
- 45 Is frugal
- 48 Insect in the sheets
- 50 Whole
- 51 Uses a sieve
- 52 Scouting group
- 53 Vital artery
- 54 VP Joe
- 56 Wise men of biblical fame
- 57 Strong ox
- 58 Brooklyn team
- 59 Sequoia or oak
- 62 Miscalculate

DOWN

- 1 Take __; assume control
- 2 __ it up; have a ball
- 3 Like yummy cinnamon rolls
- 4 Peddler
- 5 Actor Emilio
- 6 Primp
- 7 __ on to; grasp
- 8 Sort; variety
- 9 __ of two evils; better choice
- 10 Very happy
- 11 __ from; besides
- 12 Cowboys' event
- 13 Look of contempt
- 21 More modern
- 23 Crew members
- 25 Kingdom
- 26 "Dear me!"
- 27 Near
- 28 Buck or doe
- 29 Court event
- 32 Exposed
- 34 Greek letter
- 35 Whip severely
- 36 Escape

In Mexico:

'El Chapo,' Trump among favorite Halloween getups

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Two of the hottest Halloween costumes in Mexico this year are the country's most wanted man — and its most hated. Striped prison jumpers and detailed latex masks representing the mustachioed, twice-escaped drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman are selling like hotcakes ahead of the late October holiday, Diego Esponda, CEO of costume maker Caretas REV, said Thursday. Caretas, which operates a small factory in the central Mexican city of Jiutepec, has produced more than 2,600 "El Chapo" masks this month, with many of them being exported to the United States and Canada.

Besides brutal killings and the shipment of huge quantities of narcotics to the United States by his organization, the leader of the Sinaloa drug cartel is notorious for breaking out of a maximum-security Mexican prison not once but twice. The most recent was in July when he fled from his prison cell through a sophisticated mile-long (1½-kilometer) tunnel.

Designer Hector Bustos said the idea of producing a costume based on the drug lord began as a dark joke among colleagues but then they thought: "Why not?" Its popularity reflects the gallows-humor japes that many Mexicans told following "El Chapo's" second escape.

"It's kind of funny, isn't it: We captured him twice and he escapes twice, right?" Esponda said with a chuckle. "So, you know, we aren't glorifying anybody. On the contrary, I think this is a wake-up call to the government, which captures him and then he escapes." Another popular getup this year is Donald Trump, the Republican presidential candidate, real estate mogul and reality TV star who angered many south of the border this year when he denigrated Mexican immigrants as criminals, drug traffickers and "rapists."



A worker at a company specializing in manufacturing costumes, shows off a latex mask depicting two-time maximum security prison escapee, top Mexican drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman Loera, at the company's plant in Cuernavaca, Mexico. The company plans to sell the "El Chapo" costume kit that includes a mask and prison stripes, in time for Halloween.

(AP Photo/Tony Rivera)

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wk 42	room 338	\$4,000
wk 43	room 329	\$3,250
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Study: Ebola in male survivors can survive up to 9 months

MARIA CHENG
AP Medical Writer

LONDON (AP) — Doctors have found that Ebola can linger in some male survivors for up to nine months but aren't sure if that means they might still be infectious, according to new research.

In a study of 93 men in Sierra Leone, scientists found the Ebola virus in semen samples from about half of them. The risk seemed to decline over time. Ebola was detected in all nine men tested at two to three months after their illness began but in only 11 of the 43 survivors tested at seven to nine months.

Researchers aren't sure why Ebola remains in semen as opposed to other bodily fluids and don't know if the lingering virus might sicken others.

"We think there is a potential risk of exposure but we cannot determine that with 100 percent certainty right now," said Dr. Nathalie Broutet, an expert in sexually transmitted diseases at the World Health Organization and one of the study's authors. The paper was published online Wednesday in the New England Journal of Medicine.

WHO said previous studies showed the virus could survive in semen for about three months, though it noted one case where it remained for about six months. The U.N. health agency has said the sexual



In this undated colorized transmission electron micrograph file image made available by the CDC shows an Ebola virus virion. **Associated Press**

transmission of Ebola from men to women is "a strong possibility" even though the disease is mainly spread by direct contact with other bodily fluids like blood.

To date, Ebola has killed more than 11,000 people in West Africa in the outbreak that was first identified last year and now appears to be winding down. There's also about 17,000 Ebola survivors, about half

of them male.

The journal also published details of an Ebola case in March in Liberia, where a male survivor spread Ebola to a woman via unprotected sex five months after he became infected.

In an accompanying commentary, Dr. Armand Sprecher of Doctors Without Borders said if sexual transmission of Ebola was a significant means of spread-

ing the virus, "we would have seen a number of cases by now," given the thousands of male Ebola survivors in West Africa. People with Ebola are believed to be most infectious when they are the sickest. Sprecher said the results suggest that surveillance needs to last longer than now recommended once an outbreak is thought to be over in an area.

WHO and others recommend that male survivors of the lethal disease abstain from sex or use condoms for at least three months after their recovery. After that, they should be tested every month until they have two consecutive negative tests.

WHO says it's unknown how long Ebola survives in vaginal fluid, and says it's less probable that a woman who has survived Ebola could spread it to a man through sex.

Broutet said it was unclear whether the men whose samples tested positive for Ebola had any long-term side effects and if so, whether the virus might be responsible. Many survivors suffer from chronic problems including vision loss and joint pain.

Dr. Francis Moses, a district medical officer in northern Sierra Leone, said it was difficult convincing male Ebola survivors to use condoms or abstain from sex.

"The abstinence thing isn't working," he said, noting there are a number of pregnant women in his district whose partners are Ebola survivors.

Moses said the fact that thousands of Ebola survivors are living in West Africa means scientists need to figure out whether sex is a significant risk to the re-emergence of the disease. "If we don't find a way of addressing this, we will never stop Ebola," he said. □

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In this Sept. 27, 2015, file photo, Bobby Brown attends the 26th Annual Heroes and Legends Awards in Beverly Hills, Calif.
Associated Press

Bobby Brown working on 'unvarnished' memoir

HILLEL ITALIE

AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Get ready for a "raw and unvarnished" memoir by Bobby Brown.

The platinum-selling singer, ex-husband of the late Whitney Houston and father of the late Bobbi Kristina Brown has a deal with Dey Street Books for "My Prerogative," the publisher told The Associated Press on Tuesday. The book is scheduled to be released in June.

Brown, in a statement issued through Dey Street Books, called the memoir a journey through his "crazy, exciting, fascinating world."

"Right after I signed on to write my story, I went through one of the most agonizing traumas I had ever experienced with the death of my daughter," Brown said, referring to the July 26 death of 22-year-old Bobbi Kristina, who was found face-down and unresponsive in a bathtub Jan. 31 at her home in Roswell, Georgia.

Houston, Bobbi Kristina's mother, was found dead in a bathtub in Beverly Hills, California, in 2012.

"But I was surprised by how therapeutic it was to work on this project, to look at the entire arc of my life and to realize that although there has been considerable pain, I have also been incredibly blessed," Brown said.

"I hope my fans and other readers of this book will be entertained by this trip into the crazy, exciting, fascinating world of Bobby Brown. And I hope they will feel that I have been as honest and open with them in these pages as I have tried to be my entire life." Financial terms for "My Prerogative" were not disclosed. Dey Street Books called the memoir "raw and unvarnished" and promised that Brown will "tell the full story of his life and set the record straight, particularly about his relationship with Whitney Houston."

"'My Prerogative' is the story of a man who has been on the top of the mountain and in the depths of the valley and who is now finally ready to talk about his career and family life, from the passion and the excess to his creative inspirations and massive musical success," according to the publisher's statement.

Brown, 46, has been a star since co-founding New Edition more than 30 years ago, his hits including "Every Little Thing," "Humpin' Around" and the song that provides the title for his memoir, "My Prerogative." But many think of him first for his tumultuous time with Houston, to whom he was married from 1992 to 2007, his run-ins with the police and his struggles with drugs and alcoholism. □

Jay Z testifies in dispute over his hit song "Big Pimpin'"



In this Tuesday, Oct. 13, 2015 file image taken from video, rapper and entrepreneur Jay Z appears outside of court in Los Angeles.
Associated Press

ANTHONY MCCARTNEY

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jay Z told a jury Wednesday that he believes he has a valid license to use Arabic music featured on his 1999 hit "Big Pimpin'" that is now the subject of a copyright infringement trial.

The rap superstar spent roughly 90 minutes testifying in a federal courtroom Wednesday, recounting his life, his successes and the creative process that led him and music producer Timbaland to create "Big Pimpin'," which was his first major hit single.

Jay Z and Timbaland are being sued by an heir of Baligh Hamdi, an Egyptian composer who created the 1957 hit "Khosara Khosara" that has elements featured in the rapper's hit. The rapper, whose real name is Shawn Carter, used one of his old CDs — introduced into evidence by a lawyer for Hamdi's family — to illustrate his point.

"We have the rights as you can see on the bottom of the CD," Carter told jurors, referencing liner notes that credits "Khosara Khosara." The rapper mixed his testimony with no-nonsense, one-word answers, humility about his success and humorous moments.

When Pete Ross, the lawyer for Hamdi's nephew,

attempted to show him a passage in a book Carter had written about his lyrics, the performer wryly said, "You can read it from over there."

The courtroom burst into laughter, as it did again when Carter was asked by his own attorney about artists whose careers he had fostered, including Rihanna, J. Cole and Kanye West.

"Some people may have heard of him," Carter's attorney, Andrew Bart, said of West.

"One or two," Carter responded. "He's running for president."

The rapper was more serious when questioned about the rights to "Khosara Khosara," which he said he thought had been properly negotiated after issues were raised following the release of "Big Pimpin'."

Carter gave mostly curt answers, responding "yes" or "no" or "correct" to many questions.

Lawyers for Carter and Timbaland, whose real name is Timothy Mosley, told jurors on Tuesday that Hamdi's family had been repeatedly paid for the use of "Khosara Khosara." Four notes from the song's 74 notes are repeated throughout "Big Pimpin'," a music expert testified Wednesday. Carter said Mosley intro-

duced the "Khosara Khosara" melody to him just as he was about to leave a meeting. He said there wasn't anything like it on the radio at the time, and he put together the bulk of the song over the next few hours. The rapper said he likes working with Timbaland because they push each other.

"He tells me his beats are better than my raps. I tell him my raps are better than his beats," Carter said. "It's an ongoing thing that I keep winning."

Mosley and many in the courtroom laughed.

Carter sang the producer's praises, calling him a genius whose work transcends any one genre.

Jurors on Wednesday also heard from experts on Egyptian law and a videotaped deposition of Hamdi's nephew, Osama Ahmed Fahmy. Fahmy testified that he never contacted Carter, Mosley or numerous music companies he sued before filing suit in 2007, calling the case "the work of an attorney." Defense lawyers are expected to begin their case on Thursday.

Ross has accused Carter of lacing vulgar lyrics over Hamdi's beautiful melody without receiving the proper permission, although "Big Pimpin'" lyrics are not an issue in the case. □

Brie Larson channels her childhood for 'Room'

LINDSEY BAHR
AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Look at this! There's a line!" Brie Larson says, beaming and pointing at the queue outside Cinefamily, an artsy, single-screen theater in LA's Fairfax district.

Weeks before its limited release Friday, Larson arranged a free screening of "Room" for the Women of Cinefamily group, which she helped co-found over a year ago. On the drive from the hotel, she was nervous about the turnout. Now she's worried there won't be enough seats.

It's 7 p.m. and she's been going full speed since a photo shoot 12 hours ago. Her day — the day before her 26th birthday — isn't close to being over. When she's done introducing "Room" at the theater, she'll race over to her agency for a question-and-answer session with industry types, only to return to Cinefamily for the after-screening Q&A.

In the car, she takes off her sky high heels for a moment, joking that good professionals keep her looking fresh.

This is the life of an actress on the rise, and Larson has been working for almost 20 years for a moment like this.

She's all smiles when she walks onto the patio in the back of the theater, where a small reception is well underway, and immediately runs over to a group of friends who are laugh-

ing and showing Instagram photos of their art.

"Room," based on Emma Donoghue's bestselling novel, is about a woman, Ma (Larson), who was kidnapped, imprisoned in a tiny shed and impregnated by her captor. She strives to create a beautiful

that much solitude.

During this time, Larson realized she related to "Room" more deeply than she could have imagined. When she was 7, her mom packed up their old Mercedes and drove from Sacramento to Los Angeles with Larson and her

the greatest times of my life — just me, my mom and my sister all the time, doing whatever we wanted. (My mom) had such a strong imagination."

She also remembers waking up in the night to her mom's muffled sobs — the key to understanding her

World" to "21 Jump Street," "The Gambler" and even this summer's "Trainwreck," she's someone you always notice, no matter how small the part. A starring role in the 2013 indie "Short Term 12" helped her realize that she was capable of carrying a feature, too.

"She has that luminosity and that immediate presence that all stars have, but she also blends into her character completely," said "Room" director Lenny Abrahamson. "She doesn't have that problem that some real starry actors have that they're implausible as real people."

Her first acting coach told her to sit on her hands and act with her face. "He taught me to not add all these extra trappings. The smallest micro-expression is picked up," she said.

Next, she's taking a U-turn away from indies to star in "Kong: Skull Island" alongside Tom Hiddleston. She's excited that there will be a bigger audience, but she's mainly in it because of her interest in mythology. She's got directing ambitions, too, and already has a few short films to her name. But for the moment, it's all about "Room." It's now 11 p.m. and the Cinefamily audience has sung "Happy Birthday" to close out the Q&A. Her official duties are over, but she doesn't run to the car waiting to take her home. Still smiling, she stays to talk to the fans and friends who've rushed out to say hello. □



In this Wed., Sept. 30, 2015 photo, actress Brie Larson poses for a portrait at the Four Seasons Hotel in Los Angeles. Larson stars as Ma in the new film, "Room." The movie opens in U.S. theaters on Oct. 16, 2015.

Associated Press

world for her son Jack (Jacob Tremblay), who's now five.

Larson prepared intensely for the role, which has been earning her critical raves and awards buzz. She whittled down to 12 percent body fat, avoided the sun, studied the effects of sexual abuse and shut herself off from people for a month to understand where the mind goes with

younger sister. She thought they were only staying a few weeks for pilot season. Before they left Sacramento, her father had asked for a divorce, a cold truth she'd learn years later. A studio apartment with a shared Murphy bed became their home.

"It wasn't much bigger than Room. We didn't have much," she said. "And yet I remember it being one of

character. Larson even does the self-stifled cry in "Room."

"Acting isn't like being an athlete. There's no real quantifiable measure. It's just a bunch of people feeling things," said Larson. "It becomes so impossible to imagine that anyone ever gets one job, let alone two. It's like constantly winning the lottery."

From "Scott Pilgrim vs. the

Idris Elba, Taylor Swift among chairs for Met Gala in May

NEW YORK (AP) — The spring exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute will focus on technology's impact on fashion, and the May 2 gala benefiting the institute will be co-chaired by Idris Elba, Apple's chief design officer and a designer himself, Jonathan Ive, Taylor Swift and Anna Wintour.

Honorary chairs will be Nicolas Ghesquiere, the French fashion designer and creative director at

Louis Vuitton, and fellow designers Karl Lagerfeld and Miuccia Prada.

The exhibition, which often influences the fashions worn by the rich and famous who attend the gala, is titled, "manus x machina: fashion in an age of technology." It will be on view from May 5 through Aug. 14 of next year, the museum said in a statement Tuesday.

Apple is helping fund the exhibition, which — according to a news release



— "will explore the impact of new technology on fashion and how designers are reconciling the handmade and the machine-made in the creation of haute couture and avant-garde ready-to-wear."

The exhibition will feature more than 100 examples, from a 1880s Worth gown to a 2015 Chanel suit. It will

In this Jan. 4, 2014 file photo, Idris Elba arrives at the Palm Springs International Film Festival Awards Gala in Palm Springs, Calif.

Associated Press

explore the influence of the invention of the sewing machine in the 19th century, bringing on distinctions between machine-made and handmade at the onset of mass production.

Among the designers whose work will be included: Christopher Bailey, Alber Elbaz, John Galiano, Marc Jacobs, Paco Rabanne, Pierre Cardin, Noa Raviv and Alexander Wang, in addition to Ghesquiere, Lagerfeld and Prada. □

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